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INFO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 4401
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 2169
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2512
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0037
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 1119
RUFTDKA/100ARW CP RAF MILDENHALL UK
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: MANAS AIR BASE SHOOTING INVESTIGATION: INFORMING
THE KYRGYZ

Classified By: Amb. Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This cable contains an Action Request. See paragraph five below.

¶2. (C) Via diplomatic note and a personal demarche by Foreign Minister Karabayev, the Kyrgyz have recently raised officially their concern that the U.S. has still not provided the results of its investigation into the December 2006 shooting incident at Manas Air Base. The U.S., at the time of the incident, promised to provide the Kyrgyz with the results of our investigation. Post understands the U.S. investigation and follow-up process may be concluding, and it is therefore critical to plan and coordinate now the sequencing of how we convey the results to the Kyrgyz government, to the family of the slain truck driver, and to the media. Our focus should be on demonstrating that the U.S. conducted its investigation thoroughly and impartially to completion, and that our military judicial process was not influenced by political concerns.

¶3. (C) In light of our official commitment, reiterated since the incident by visiting senior U.S. State and Defense Department officials, to provide to the Kyrgyz the results of our investigation, it is essential that the U.S. officially inform the Kyrgyz government of the results prior to any release to the media in the U.S. or elsewhere regarding this case. Preferably, a senior DOD official could convey this information in person in Bishkek to senior GOKG officials, following which the official could meet with the press to make a brief announcement and respond to questions. This could be timed to coincide with any press release made in the U.S.

¶4. (C) Post understands that this will require careful cooperation with elements of OSD, Central Command, Offutt Air Force Base and the OSI, which conducted the investigation, due to the legal concerns involved. It is essential that this be done so as to preclude the political consequences of a release to the media of the results of the investigation

prior to our ability to convey this information privately to the Kyrgyz government. Were Kyrgyz government leaders to learn first of the results from the international media, it would inevitably undermine their continued political support for the base. Eighteen months after the incident, much public anger over the shooting has died down. Mishandling how we manage the release of the results of the report could easily, and unnecessarily, re-ignite the flames and fuel the appeals of those who would like to close the base. Regardless of the results of the investigation we expect negative blowback, but how we convey the information can be a significant factor in the intensity, duration, and strategic consequences of this blowback.

15. (C) Action Request. That the Department, in coordination with all relevant elements of the Department of Defense, agree on a sequenced roll-out strategy for the investigation that ensures that we will be able to inform the Kyrgyz government officially of the results of the investigation before any information is released to the press.
YOVANOVITCH